



Branford, Connecticut

Economic Development Commission

Annual Report

JULY 1, 2008 – JUNE 30, 2009

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) met throughout the past year on the third Wednesday of each month (except August) and enjoyed continued high attendance and participation.

After many years of service to the Commission and to the town, Rhoda Loeb and Dick Sullivan resigned from the EDC this past year. The Commission deeply appreciates the time, energy and commitment that both Rhoda and Dick provided to the town. At the same time, we are pleased to welcome Sharon Davis, Craig Fuchs, and Peter Indeck as new members of the Commission.

The Commission is again grateful to Neal Crowley for his monthly reports on activity with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The annual **"State of the Town Breakfast"** was again coordinated by the commission and held in March, this year with noted economist Don Klepper-Smith as its keynote speaker. Klepper-Smith, chair of the Governor's Economic Advisory Council, forecast a slow recovery but saw the town as well situated. In particular he cited the town's low unemployment rate relative to that of the region, state and country, as well as its track of sound management as reflected in Standard & Poor's upgrade of the town to a triple A rating.

With the completion of its **economic development strategic action plan**, the commission findings were incorporated in to P&Z's final Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The POCD was approved in December and subsequently filed with the state's Office of Policy & Management (OPM), as required by state law.

With the completion of the POCD, the Commission began work on two related efforts: development of a **business incentive program** and undertaking a **"targeted business plan."**

The Commission expects the results of these separate projects to be complementary and to serve as important components in the town's "tool kit" for use in its recruitment efforts of new business and in assisting existing companies with possible expansions. The Connecticut Economic Resource Center, CERC, will conduct the targeted business analysis with findings and recommendations expected by the end of the year. CERC also conducted the 2002 Business Survey and presented its final report at that year's state of the town event.

At the same time, the Commission continued its **work with various regional partners, particularly the Regional Workforce Alliance, the Regional Growth Partnership [RGP] and the Greater New Haven Convention and Visitor Bureau.**

Additional activities undertaken by the Commission throughout FY 2008-2009 included:

- Continuing efforts through the **Workforce Alliance** to provide assistance to local businesses with "Incumbent Worker" training grants as a means to increase a company's productivity and competitiveness.


- Working closely with the **Greater New Haven Convention and Visitor Bureau** as the major resource for work with the tourism industry.

- Utilizing the **New England Real Estate Journal's** broad readership and reputation in placing articles that promote Branford's assets and highlights its quality of life for new and relocating businesses.

- Ongoing review of **demolition application notices** for structures of 75 years or more, as required by town ordinance. And,

- The **Town Center Merchants Committee's**, under its new chairman Peter Indeck, continued in its role as a resource and leader for the businesses around the green and in the town center.

Respectfully submitted,



Ray Figlweski, Chairman